

Summary of Ag Handler Exposure Monitoring in the State of Washington and Reported Pesticide-related Illnesses in California

- The trend is clearly down in terms of significantly depressed cholinesterase enzyme levels among ag handlers with regard to the use of azinphos methyl in the State of Washington per their 2005 report.
- Only one ag handler had significantly depressed cholinesterase enzyme levels in the State of Washington in 2005 and two in 2004 per EPA's document titled, "Proposed Decisions for the Remaining Uses of Azinphos Methyl, June 9, 2006." In 2005, 611 workers were tested and 580 were tested in 2004.
- Per the 2005 State of Washington report for all workers of pesticides, "...the likelihood of a worker experiencing > 20% depression in both tests [red blood cell and serum cholinesterase], was very low (0.8% of total workers with a periodic test)."
- "...hours of handling is not a strong predictor of the degree of ChE depression for individuals."
- "The greatest proportion of ChE depression exceeding the benchmark of 20% from baseline occurred primarily during dormant season spraying of tree fruits." However, the azinphos methyl label forbids its application during the dormant season.
- For all pesticides, the State of Washington found numerous violations involving the lack of an appropriate respirator cartridge or change out of schedule and not wearing appropriate chemical resistant headgear when required by the pesticide label.
- In 2004 and 2005, "50% of employers investigated are using a [another named OP pesticide, not AZM] product that does not include a label requirement for respiratory protection."
- Per a summary report by the California Department of Pesticide Regulations, there were no illnesses reported by California physicians associated with the use of azinphos methyl in from 1999 to 2002 and none in 2004. There was one possible illness in 2003.